

Steven Sepe

From: Jordan Goyette <goyettejordan@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 29, 2021 9:58 AM
To: House Finance Committee
Subject: Testimony in favor of H 5453

To Chairman Abney & members of the committee,

Passing this bill is one of the best things you can do to complete one of the main goals of cannabis legalization, and that's eliminating the illicit black market element. That is because overwhelmingly, accessing legal medical cannabis can be very cost prohibitive. It has been for myself personally. The costs to home growing are prohibitive, as are the fees for applications. The pricing of our medicine doesn't make things much easier either. Unfortunately, the general assembly hasn't made it easier for the industry to do better in recent years, hiking the annul compassion center license fee from \$5,000 in 2018 to \$500,000 now. The assembly could have instead taken up then Governor Raimondo's modest expansion from 3 to 15 compassion centers, allowing 12 new locations across the state, but for some reason chose a truly outlandish path. The reduction back down to \$5,000 is one of the most critical portions of this bill, but much of it is focused around excellent patient protection provisions. Creating a hardship designation for SSDI recipients and a discount program for their medicine. Eliminating the often prohibitive cost of plant tagging for some of the already most vulnerable cardholders, those confined to home and who must grow their own or employ a caregiver. Removing the limit on cannabis centers to allow the industry to flourish in our state, until we are at a ratio of one facility per ever 1,000 cardholders. This is also critical, as the current centers are concentrated in Providence, Warwick & Portsmouth. Zero in Northern not Western RI, and none in South County as well. Just think of the revenue impacts, the economic development and new jobs flowing into your communities. This proposal goes bolder than the steps to expand to 9 centers in 2019 the legislature took, and transforms our medicinal cannabis program into a model for the rest of the nation. I hope you will swiftly consider this legislation favorably and thank Rep. Slater for the great bill.

Thank You,

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Sent from my iPhone